



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Patent and Trademark Office

Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------

08/491,888 10/10/95 RIGLER R 10496/P58841

HM12/0119
JACOBSON PRICE HOLMAN & STERN
400 SEVENTH STREET NW
WASHINGTON DC 20004

EXAMINER

WESSENDORF, T

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

1627

DATE MAILED:

01/19/00

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary

Application No.
08/491,888

Applicant(s)

Rigler et al

Examiner

T. Wessendorf

Group Art Unit

1627



☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11/12/99

☐ This action is **FINAL**.

☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, **prosecution as to the merits is closed** in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1035 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

A shortened statutory period for response to this action is set to expire 3 month(s), or thirty days, whichever is longer, from the mailing date of this communication. Failure to respond within the period for response will cause the application to become abandoned. (35 U.S.C. § 133). Extensions of time may be obtained under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Disposition of Claim

☒ Claim(s) 107-147 is/are pending in the application.

Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

☒ Claim(s) 107-147 is/are rejected.

☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction or election requirement.

Application Papers

☐ See the attached Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.

☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.

☐ The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is ☐ approved ☐ disapproved.

☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

☐ All ☐ Some* ☒ None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been

☐ received.

☐ received in Application No. (Series Code/Serial Number) _____.

☐ received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*Certified copies not received: _____

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

☐ Notice of References Cited, PTO-892

☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). _____

☐ Interview Summary, PTO-413

☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948

☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152

— SEE OFFICE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES —

Art Unit: 1627

The specification is objected to because of grammatical and typographical errors. For example: "rached" at page 12, line 5; "fiel" at page 31, line 3. Page 15, first complete paragraph recites "Similarly interfering effects can be caused conditions of the medium.."

The use of the trademark e.g., NEOFLUAR at page 31, paragraph 7 has been noted in this application. It should be capitalized wherever it appears and be accompanied by the generic terminology.

Although the use of trademarks is permissible in patent applications, the proprietary nature of the marks should be respected and every effort made to prevent their use in any manner which might adversely affect their validity as trademarks.

This application has been filed with informal drawings which are acceptable for examination purposes only. Formal drawings will be required when the application is allowed.

It is noted that e.g., Figure 11 contains Figs. A-E but the specification does not describe a corresponding Figs. A-E for said Figure 11. Furthermore, a separate description of each of the drawings should correspondingly be provided in the specification under the separate heading "BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS".

Art Unit: 1627

The specification has not been checked to the extent necessary to determine the presence of **all** possible minor errors (grammatical, typographical and idiomatic). Applicant's cooperation is requested in correcting any errors of which applicant may become aware in the specification.

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 107-147 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

A). The recited 'measuring volume is arranged at a distance of < 1000 um from a laser focusing optic' is not supported in the as-filed specification. Cf. with original claim 14 which recites for a volume compartment, not a measuring volume. It appears that the measuring volume is a measured volume of the sample and not in the context of a "measuring volume within said sample", as claimed. (Emphasis added) Cf. With page 7, last incomplete

Art Unit: 1627

paragraph of the specification and the critical aspects of the claimed as it relates to said volume size.

B). The specification fails to describe a method by which a molecule can be assayed by the laser excited fluorescence correlation spectroscopy(FCS). The specification further fails to teach the different kinds of substituent attached to a molecule such that said substituent fluoresces when exposed to a laser and/or the different material-specific parameters that the molecules possess. The claims cover numerous unspecified parameters for one skilled in the art to determine. The recited molecule would read on a limitless number of compounds, in a modified or unmodified form, that can contain numerous substituent bound thereto. The kind, amount of molecules present in a sample, the incalculable number of substituents that can be coupled to the molecule, the material-specific parameters that a specific molecule can possess to enable its differentiation and assaying from the numerous molecules contain in a sample are not adequately described. The description in the specification, like the claims, simply recites any kind of molecule. Not a single or particular molecule or substituent coupled thereto has been exemplified. One skilled in the art is faced with too numerous unpredictable factors before one could determine or measure the

Art Unit: 1627

intended presence of a specific molecule coupled substituent. For example, it is well known that some molecules such as enzymes, carbonic anhydrase, have a propensity to aggregate or precipitate when derivatized with certain fluorescent reagents, some variants that have been constructed are so unstable that the gene product cannot be isolated as a holoprotein. Variants of these enzymes are known to be generally unreactive under the certain reagents and conditions due to steric hindrance, or that derivatives with cationic hydrophobic reactive dyes were unstable and precipitated rapidly. At the present state of the art, it is difficult to predict which variants will be stable as fluorescent-labeled apoproteins. Furthermore, the use of fluorescence correlation spectroscopy method has been greatly restricted by experimental difficulties, photochemical instability of the fluorescent materials limits the acceptable exciting intensity and hence, the attainable signal-to-noise ratio for a given dye. (Kask, page 163). These observations seemed to be appreciated by applicants at e.g., page 33, paragraph 11 of the instant disclosure. Applicants state that '...when selecting dyes, it is of great importance to select those dyes which have a very low tendency to form triplet states. Each triplet state entered raises the probability of a chemical

Art Unit: 1627

reaction, does not provide a signal or provides a signal with undesired wavelength and extends the period until the molecule is ready to be exited into the single state again....' (Emphasis added). Accordingly, determination of these numerous factors can only proceed empirically before a precise measurement of a specific molecule in a sample could be determined or assayed. The spec. does not provide enough guidance, direction or working examples that would aid one skilled in the art to practice the claimed invention.

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 107-147 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

A). The preamble of claim 107 recites for a method of assaying a molecule(s) in a sample but the method steps recite for determining material-specific parameters of said molecule and not methods by which the molecules in a sample are assayed. There seems to be no correlation between the recited method steps and

Art Unit: 1627

the preamble. The claim appears to be more for detecting for the presence of a molecule in a sample, rather than assaying.

Furthermore, It is not clear, within the claimed context, what constitutes a measuring (measured?) volume within a sample or how said measuring volume is determined in a sample such that said volume can be arranged at the recited distance from a laser focusing optic. The metes and bounds of the recited material-specific parameters are indefinite and unclear as to the materials that is specific for a molecule.

B). Claim 109 is confusing in the recitation that the concentration of said molecules to be assayed amounts to $<1 \text{ uM}$. Is the concentration predetermined prior to assaying?

C). Claim 108 is confusing in the recitation of "measuring volume comprises" $< 10^{-14} \text{ l}$.

D). Claim 110 is indefinite in the recitation of the different material-specific parameters for said substituent and inconsistent with the base claim recitation for the material-specific parameters being for the molecule, not for the substituent. The use of different terminologies to mean the same thing provides for confusion and ambiguity.

Art Unit: 1627

D). Claims 111-147 are replete with antecedent basis problems in regard to both terminology and concept. These errors are too numerous to identify. However, a non-exhaustive list is presented below. Applicant is requested to supply antecedent basis for terms and concepts throughout the claims. For example, claim 111, change of coordinates of said measuring volume with times defines an apparent diffusion time of said molecules; claim 112, luminophore-labeled ligand having spectroscopic parameters which are correlated with a property or function; claim 113, ligands or ligand-molecule complexes (different from substituents?), also are all of these functions determined by the excitation method?; claim 116, "measuring takes place", is this the measuring volume?; claim 118, molecular trap(?) and "target molecule", also the term "smaller" is a relative term; claim 119, complexed ligands; claim 120, free luminophore-labeled ligands; claim 122, first electrophoresis step and transporting said complexes formed into said measuring volume in a second electrophoresis step; claim 144, the products of an in vitro protein biosynthesis. Furthermore, the process steps do not appear to correlate and do not seem to further limit the base claim and broadens the base claim. Also, how can ionic ligands be forced in a measuring volume (claim 117)? The claims recite

Art Unit: 1627

for different embodiments or parameters for which the claimed method obviously does not encompass.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 107-147 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being obvious over either Meyer or applicants' disclosure of known prior art in view of applicants' disclosure of known prior art or Qian et al (Proceedings of 46th Annual meeting of electron Microscopy Soc. of Am.)

Meyer et al, as stated by applicants at page 22 of 4/12/99 REMARKS, discloses a method for simultaneous determination of molar weights and lateral diffusion constant of particles in three and two dimensional systems. Spontaneous concentration fluctuations in space and time are analyzed by monitoring fluctuation in the fluorescence from fluorescein-labeled molecules, excited by a rotating laser spot. The Fluorescence particle counting technique allows to directly count the number of independent particles in a defined volume. Measurements are

Art Unit: 1627

performed by placing the objective at a distance of 14 mm with respect to the sample.

Applicants disclose at page 14, paragraph 3 that "the performance of the method according to the invention becomes evident in particular when compared to technologies presently being in the market. A well introduced method is the so-called FPIA technology of ABBOTT., using the so-called TDX system for the related instruments. Here, the depolarization of fluorescence labeled molecules is determined in homogenous assays.

Meyer or the prior art disclosed by applicants does not disclose the objective distance of $< 1000 \text{ um}$, as recited.

However, Meyer as stated above discloses a distance of 14K. Applicants, on the other hand, disclose at e.g., page 30, paragraph 2, the use of carrier sheets having well as such as described or used for instance in the patent publications PCT/EP 89/01320...The reaction carriers, referred to as multi-well sheets, bear wells which can receive the samples for FCS analysis ..They are controlled by a two-dimensionally positional sheet insertion device such that the bottom of the sample containing well is approached closely to the objective, so that the liquid sample volume is not further away from the edge of the objective than about 100-1000 um ..."

Art Unit: 1627

Qian discloses at e.g., page 39, first complete paragraph the distance of 158.

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to place the objective from the sample at a distance of e.g., 1000 um in the method of Meyer or applicants' disclose prior art since this distance would obviously be the optimum distance for the compound under study and such distance is positively recited by e.g., Qian. Thus, the disclosure of the prior art distances include the recited distance wherein such distance is a parameter dependent on the factors at hand and is optimized depending on said influencing factors. One having ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to use the appropriate distance that would produce the optimum results using FCS technology.

Applicants admit that Ref. D5, Mayer disclose a working distance of 14000 um with respect to the sample. But argue that one having ordinary skill in the art would not accept this distance as a convenient wording (sic, working) distance. Applicants further argued the surprising advantages of the recited limitations. Applicants' arguments is merely conclusory and not supported by factual evidence, especially in the absence

Art Unit: 1627

of evidence as to the applicability of said working distance to any kind of molecule. Cf. to the specific molecule of Meyer providing optimum result for a specific molecule. Therefore, it is not seen how said advantage can be applicable to any molecule, absence any evidence to the contrary.

The Group and/or Art Unit location of your application in the PTO has changed. To aid in correlating any papers for this application, all further correspondence regarding this application should be directed to Group Art Unit 1627.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to T. Wessendorf whose telephone number is (703) 3967. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. to Fri. from 8 to 4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Donald E. Adams, Ph.D., can be reached on (703) 308-0570. The fax phone number for this Group is (703) 308-7924.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0196.

Tdw

1/18/00

T. Wessendorf
Patent Examiner